

HOUSING ASSISTANCE POLICY

Delivering Disabled Facilities Grants and Housing Support



INDEPENDENT
LIVING



SAFER
HOMES



BETTER
WELLBEING



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Service: Enforcement & Regulation



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Our commitment is to help residents live independently, safely and well in their homes through practical adaptations and support.



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The Council will review this policy at regular intervals and in conjunction with any wider reviews or new burden impacts including the Health and Wellbeing Strategy or in response to changing policies or funding at a national or local level or to reflect evidence concerning the conditions of housing needs within the area. The maximum review period will be no longer than 5 years.

Gloucester City Council

Housing Assistance Policy

1. Introduction

Housing is a wider determinant of health and there is an increasing body of evidence that poor housing that does meet the occupiers need can be linked to poor health and increases the risk of health inequalities in our communities. Removing disabling barriers from the home environment enables people to thrive and reduces the impact on the NHS, Adult Social Care and improves people's health, wellbeing and employment prospects.

This housing assistance policy sets out how Gloucester City Council ("the Council") will provide financial assistance via the DFG framework to improve and adapt homes, enabling residents to remain and thrive in their home through delivering adaptations and supporting the provision of decent, healthy and safe housing. It will ensure equity in this provision for people with disabilities, enabling innovation and flexibility in the discretionary use of the grant.

The Council's legal obligations, powers and duties for financial assistance are contained within the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and the flexibility of the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002. Housing assistance can minimize the impact of a disabling environment and promote independence, aligning with the goals of the Care Act 2014 and reducing the burden on health and social care budgets by reducing unnecessary hospital admissions and reducing length of hospital stays.

The main funding source supporting this policy is Government funding for Disabled Facilities Grants, allocated to the Council through the Better Care Fund (BCF) on an annual award basis. The Better Care Fund (BCF) programme supports local funding systems to successfully deliver the integration of health and social care in a way that supports person-centred care, sustainability and better outcomes for people and carers.

Decisions on additional financial allocations outside of the annual DFG funding award will be made in accordance with the jointly agreed BCF spending plan between the Council and the BCF managers and board. The plan will follow the appropriate BCF Policy Framework and BCF Planning Guidance for the specified year (which includes guidance on Disabled Facilities Grants) and will go through the appropriate governance structure.

Any necessary changes to financial assistance will be approved through the appropriate governance structures and published on the Council's website as policy revision amendments.

2. Equality and Diversity

We believe in treating everyone fairly and promoting equality while preventing discrimination on any basis. This policy will be applied consistently to all residents, considering the unique needs of individuals and communities. We will not discriminate against anyone, and we will take proactive measures to reduce discrimination and harassment and ensure that this policy and

funding awarded is delivered those that meet the need of requiring adaptations in their home so they can thrive and remain independent. This Policy complies with the law and addresses all the “protected characteristics” outlined in the Equalities Act 2010. Our aim is to ensure equal opportunities and fair treatment for everyone in our community in the delivery of this policy.

3. Our Policy Aims

This policy sets out how Gloucester City Council (“the Council”) will provide financial assistance via the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) framework to improve and adapt homes, enabling residents of Gloucester to remain independent, safer, healthier and thrive in their home.

Our focus is on supporting individuals, along with their caregivers, by removing barriers to enable them to live independently, confidently, and safely in their own homes. Housing assistance can minimize the impact of a disabling environment and promote independence, aligning with the goals of the Care Act 2014 and reducing the burden on health and social care budgets by reducing unnecessary hospital admissions and reducing length of hospital stays. It will ensure equity for people with disabilities, enabling innovation and flexibility in the discretionary use of the grant.

This policy contributes towards Gloucestershire’s Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2030 and aligns with its vision for the health and wellbeing of the residents of Gloucester: - To support Housing and Health of residents, encouraging healthy lifestyles; reducing social isolation and loneliness; improving mental wellbeing; enabling the best start in life; reducing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs); and enabling people to be more physically active.

As our population’s needs change it is highly important that our homes and neighbourhoods are adapted to enable barrier free access that supports people at every stage of their life. A key challenge identified in Gloucestershire’s 2024 Market position statement is that of providing appropriate housing and enabling people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible – DFGs are clearly a cornerstone of meeting this challenge.

This policy will ensure that resources are equitably targeted at those who need to fund adaptations, repairs or improve their home and retain independence in appropriate housing. By providing adaptations to those who have a medical need, as well as developing a preventative approach, we can reduce hospitalisation and improve the health and wellbeing of both adults and children. In turn this will relieve pressures on Social Services and NHS partners.

4. Summary of Assistance Types

This summary of financial assistance provides a list of each type of funding available under this policy and should be read in conjunction with the supporting appendix A. Our first obligation and priority are to deliver mandatory DFG’s. Additionally, we will offer a range of discretionary grants to help older and disabled individuals live independently and safely in their homes. However, we would not promote this discretionary assistance at the expense of the statutory mandatory function. For discretionary funding assistance, the Council reserves the right to make amendments to the eligibility criteria, level of grant or assistance if it can be demonstrated that any such changes will enable the Council to better meet its strategic housing objectives and Better Care Fund objectives.

4.1 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)

The mandatory grant (currently a max award of £30,000) supports the provision of adaptations to promote independent living within the home, subject to the provisions of the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. This grant is set out within legislation and this policy outlines the local variations that have been adopted regarding the inclusion of extended warranty costs and local Council tax reduction as a passporting benefit.

Minor aids and adaptations are delivered by a shared funding arrangement with the County Council and other district Councils to support assistance available through a Minor Adaptations/Handyman Service and can be accessed directly via Occupational Therapy Service at Gloucestershire County Council to reduce the necessity for full Disabled Facility Grant applications.

4.2 Discretionary Assistance

The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 (the Order) provides general powers for the Council to provide assistance for housing renewal including home adaptations. The Council provides the following discretionary forms of assistance under the Order enabled through the Better Care Fund allocation, subject to the primary requirements of Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant being met. These forms of discretionary assistance are intended to complement a mandatory disabled facilities grant. No stand-alone applications for these forms of assistance will be considered or permitted without a mandatory DFG referral and application being made the Council. See appendix A for more details.

- **Applicant Contribution Support** - To increase the affordability of applications by offering up to a £10,000 waiver of the disabled persons assessed contribution to the approved grant,
- **Dementia Friendly** - This assistance will provide aids and adaptations in the home designed to enable people with a diagnosis of dementia to manage their surroundings and retain their independence.
- **Discretionary Top-Up Grant** - enables top-up funding to a Disabled Facilities Grant scheme that exceeds the costs of the Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant maximum (currently £30,000) where the additional costings are considered justifiable. A limit may be applied on a case-by-case basis according to budget availability.
- **Hoarding Support Grant** – to support the general provision and delivery of a mandatory DFG.
- **Hospital Discharge / Palliative Care**– Prioritised applications for adaptations to the home environment to enable hospital discharge where problems in the home are identified as a possible reason for delayed discharge.
- **Professional Fees**- Eligible ancillary charges are included in grant approvals to professional fees for agents, technical surveys and application support.
- **Rapidly Progressing and Highly Debilitating Conditions** – To assist persons with a relevant diagnosis e.g. Motor Neurone Disease (MND), with specialised living aids to enable independent and safe living.
- **Neurodiversity resulting in Substantially Debilitating Conditions** – To assist persons with a relevant diagnosis of conditions that significantly and substantially have a long

term impact on day-to-day life e.g. Autism & Aspergers Syndrome, with specialised living aids to enable independent and safe living.

- **Relocation Grant** – A grant may be available to help a resident to move if adaptations to their current home through DFG are determined not to be feasible or reasonable, but could be delivered to an alternative home.
- **Safe, Warm and Well Grants**- This assistance is for eligible owner occupiers for energy efficiency improvements in the home. Alternative funding may also be available through the Severn Wye Warm and Well Partnership [Warm and Well | a fitter home for a healthy future](#).
- **Home Repair Loans Assistance** - The Council may review discretionary funding for opportunities for housing renewal assistance and low-interest loans to ensure that vulnerable persons remain independent in their homes in safe, warm, and healthy conditions.
- **Extended warranties** – All grants that are approved and that required specialised equipment to be installed will have a discretionary grant provision to allow for the equipment (where applicable) to have an extended warranty period to cover a maximum of 5 years.

The following sections apply to both mandatory and discretionary grant funding.

5. Making Payments

The DFG financial assistance will only be paid under the following conditions:

- The assisted works must be completed within 12 months of approval unless the delay was the result of unforeseen change or an extension due to exceptional circumstances is agreed. Requests for extensions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- The assisted works must be carried out accordance to the specifications outlined in the formal approval and conditions or with prior agreement from the Council.
- The Council and the applicant are satisfied with the completed works.
- The Council must receive an invoice, demand, or receipt for payment in an 'acceptable' format. The invoice should be addressed to the applicant to reflect the contractual arrangement between them, their agent and their contractor. The invoice must be copied to the Council and include sufficient detail of the works being covered by this invoice and any agreed variations. Invoices or demands from applicants or family members are not acceptable.

The payment of assistance to the contractor can be made via the applicant or, if requested in the original application, the council may pay directly to the applicant's agent and contractor.

The assistance may be paid in one lump sum upon satisfactory completion of the works or as interim payments as key stages of the work completes and progresses. Interim payments will only be made if the Council is satisfied that the value of work completed exceeds the claimed value to date. The frequency and number of interim payments must be determined before works commence and not exceed 90% of the total for any one contractor. The council aims to pay all invoices deemed to be 'acceptable' within 30 days of receipt.

The Council is not responsible for the quality or durability of the grant works and the payment of the grant or any interim payment by the Council does not mean that it accepts any responsibility

for the works. Any contract for works is between the Applicant, their agent (where applicable) and their Contractor. The Applicant must satisfy themselves that the works are of satisfactory quality and fit for purpose. Any issues concerning the standard of the works is a matter between the Applicant, their agent (where applicable) and the Contractor.

The contract for works funded by Disabled Facilities Grants, along with associated assistance, will be between the applicant and the contractor, as specified in the legislation. While the Council's Standing Orders regarding procurement do not directly apply since the Council is not entering into a contract, The Council will still follow the same principles when obtaining quotes on behalf of supported applicants to ensure appropriate services are provided.

The provision of assistance other than mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants is subject to the availability of funding. All applications will be evaluated based on the identified medical needs and circumstances of the applicant or household.

Associated costs incurred during the application process, such as architects' or professional fees or Land Registry charges, may be included in the value of any awarded funding and will not be paid separately, except for in exceptional circumstances where works cannot proceed, and such costs may be eligible for discretionary assistance.

The provision of mandatory grants and discretionary financial assistance will be subject to internal and external auditing to ensure proper procedures are in place and followed, and that public funds are appropriately utilised. Discretionary grants will not be offered at the expense of statutory mandatory grants.

6. Restrictions

There are certain cases where we may not be able to provide assistance or where the funding may be reduced or reclaimed. These situations are outlined below:

1. Assistance cannot be provided when there is a dispute over property ownership or a property is in probate.
2. The applicant must also be 18 years of age or older (unless via proxy for a Child DFG).
3. If the property owner(s) have a legal obligation to carry out the necessary works and it is reasonable for them to do so.
4. The works fall outside of the scope of the OT recommended and approved schedule of works to meet the applicants needs and where the proposed works do not meet the Necessary, Appropriate, Reasonable and Practicable (NARP) tests.
5. Assistance is not typically provided for temporary housing or residences (i.e. occupancy periods less than the 5-year intention to stay as set out in the DFG conditions).
6. We cannot give assistance for works that were started before formal approval of the application. However, in exceptional circumstances, we may exempt an application from this condition, such as when a defect poses serious risks to health and safety.
7. We do not provide grant assistance for works covered by insurance. If a applicant can make an insurance claim, the assistance amount will be reduced by the insurance company's liability. We will require the applicant to pursue relevant insurance claims and repay the assistance provided if applicable.

8. We will only offer financial assistance if the property's age, condition, and structural layout make it feasible to achieve the required scope of works and the scheme meets the Necessary, Appropriate, Reasonable and Practicable (NARP) criteria.
9. The Council will assess the prices/quotes provided by contractors to ensure value for money. This may include comparing them with similar works priced within a comparable period or national scheduled rates.
10. If we find that the price quoted by contractors is too high, we may advise the applicant that the total eligible assistance will be a lower amount. Any shortfall in funding will be the responsibility of the applicant to meet.
11. If the applicant chooses a different or enhanced scheme or items of works, we will only provide financial assistance for the primary requirements identified by the Occupational Therapy Service and the Council. Any shortfall in funding will be the responsibility of the applicant to meet. The applicant will be responsible for costs above the approved amount.
12. We may refuse an application lacking required information or documentation.
13. Deviating from the approved scheme of works without prior agreement may lead to the approval being rescinded or further payments of assistance being refused.
14. If the applicant ceases to be the owner of the property before the works are completed, they must repay the full and total amount of financial assistance received.
15. A grant condition imposing a liability to repay assistance may be registered as a Local Land Charge, payable upon the property's sale.
16. Works must be completed within 12 months of approval, with a possible extension of up to 6 months if agreed by the Council.
17. For common parts of a dwelling, assistance will only cover the applicant's reasonable share of the liability.
18. In exceptional cases, the Council may defer payment of a Disabled Facilities Grant for up to 12 months.
19. Assistance may be provided for caravans and houseboats used as main residences, subject to eligibility requirements. Holiday residences, caravans on holiday sites, second homes, and sheds or outbuildings do not qualify for DFG assistance.

7. Other Requirements

When granting approval for assistance, the Council may impose additional binding conditions. Some examples of these conditions are:

1. The applicant may be required to contribute towards the cost of the works.
2. The Council may request the right to nominate tenants for available rental housing.
3. The applicant must commit to maintaining the property in good repair after the assisted works are completed.
4. The applicant must commit to reporting any malfunctioning or damaged adaptations that are covered by a service and repair warranty in the required timescales as set out by the warranty conditions.
5. If specialised equipment is provided as part of the assistance, the Council or its appointed agent may reclaim the equipment when it is no longer needed.

8. Decisions, Notifications and Changes

The DFG application process follows 5 key stages:

1. Initial referral from an Occupational Therapist.
2. DFG Application Enquiry and Preliminary Test of Resources (PTOR).
3. DFG Offer in Principle
4. Full DFG application with Plans, Schedule of Works and Quotations for the works, and
5. DFG Approval.

Once the Council reviews the full and complete application (stage 4), they will inform the applicant in writing if it has been approved or refused. The notification will be sent as soon as practically possible, but within 6 months of receiving a complete and valid application (stage 4).

If the application is approved, the notification will specify the eligible works, the amount of assistance provided, and the builder/contractor assigned to carry out the works.

In some cases, for a Disabled Facilities Grant, the Council may defer payment for up to 12 months due to financial or operational reasons. This will be clearly stated in the approval notice. It is expected that all works are completed and signed off within 12 months of the grant approval but if the delivery of the adaptations and schedule of works exceeds the 12 month date from approval then extensions will be considered on a case by case basis especially where the case requires extensive and complex works to meet the residents needs.

In certain situations where unforeseen circumstances cause the cost of the works to increase or decrease unexpectedly, the Council may review the financial assistance given. If deemed appropriate, they will issue consequent Variation Orders showing amendments to the approval certificate. The total funding is also confirmed separately on completion correspondence.

9. Appeals

If you've applied for assistance and your full and complete application (stage 4) was not considered within 6 months or refused, you have the right to request a review of the decision. To do this, you must submit a written request to the Council within 28 days of receiving the decision letter or after the 6 month reasonable decision period has expired. The Service Manager will then conduct a review of the application and decision and inform you of the outcome in writing.

If you remain dissatisfied with the review decision:

1. You can go through the Council's Corporate Complaints procedure to address your concerns.
2. Alternatively, if you are not satisfied with the Council's response through the complaints procedure you can approach the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman for further assistance.

Exceptions to the policy may be considered only in cases of exceptional circumstances where you cannot reasonably fund or carry out the necessary work.

If you have complaints related to the service delivery rather than the policy itself, you should direct those to the Council. We will investigate your complaint following our Complaints Procedure [[Complaints, Compliments and Comments | Gloucester City Council](#)].

If the complaint about any additional works or alterations carried out without prior approval from the Council, both these increased costs or the complaint will not be considered and the responsibility for funding such changes will remain with the applicant.

10. Service Standards

There are no national standards for the services provided through this policy except a statutory requirement for Councils to determine valid and fully made applications for mandatory disabled facilities grant within six months.

This does not account for pre-application activities such as the screening process and the 'application support' and administration including occupational therapy assessment, means testing, producing specifications, tendering contractors, etc. The 6-month period commences when the valid application paperwork is complete, the Schedule of works are approved and the contractors' quotes have been received (stage 4 in section 8 above).

In accordance with government guidance, the Council is aiming to reduce the timescales for the delivery stages of home adaptations funded by a disabled facilities grant. The timescales for moving through these stages will depend upon the urgency and complexity of the adaptations required as well as factors relating to an applicant. More urgent cases will be prioritised for action, with larger and more complex schemes taking longer to complete.

11 Consultation and Implementation

This policy has been developed through public consultation exercises with Gloucester City residents, voluntary sector partners, stakeholders and partners such as the County DFG Forum, NHS, Social care services, and leads on the ICB and One Legal.

Appendix A – Types of Assistance

Mandatory and Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant Details

B.1 Mandatory

B1.1 Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	
Purpose	To support the provision of adaptations to promote independent living within the home, subject of meeting the purposes set out in the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.
Eligible Applicant	The owner, tenant, or occupier of a dwelling where a disabled person is living and/or intends to live for the next 5 years.
Eligible Works	Works considered necessary to meet the needs set out in an Occupational Therapists referral. Aids and adaptations must meet the purposes set out in appendix C.
Maximum amount of funding	£30,000 or as per the current statutory limit. This may be supplemented with elements of discretionary funding in Appendix A.
Means Test	Works are subject to the statutory means test as set out in legislation, with a local amendment to include Local Council Tax Reduction (excluding the single-person reduction) as a passporting benefit. The means test does not apply to disabled children and young people.
Land Charge	Where the applicant is an owner-occupier and the grant value is over £5,000, a local land charge up to £10,000 or a third of the grant award will apply for 10 years.
Conditions	The contractor supplies a 5-year discretionary warranty is included in the purchase cost for specialist equipment including stairlifts, step lifts, hoists and wash/dry toilets. Please Appendix C.

B.2 Discretionary

This section covers the details of the discretionary assistance included within this policy.

B2.1 Applicant Contribution Support	
Purpose	This is a discretionary grant to support applicants who are assessed as having a means tested contribution and can be used to waive the initial £10,000 of an assessed contribution towards a grant award. Any assessed contribution exceeding this discretionary funding must be funded by the applicant.
Eligible Applicant	Those eligible for Mandatory DFG.
Eligible Works	Available towards the cost of DFG eligible works only, that would have been covered by the assessed contribution. Funding will be reviewed on an individual case basis.
Amount of funding	Up to £10,000 (For assessed contributions £0-£10,000)
Means Test	No additional DFG means test
Land Charge	Where the applicant is an owner-occupier and the grant value is over £5,000, a local land charge up to £10,000 or a third of the grant award will apply for 10 years.
Conditions	In addition to standard grant conditions: - Contributions will be reduced in full and funded by this grant up to £10,000 and will be treated as discretionary funding. Applicants will be expected to fund any assessed contribution above £10,000. Unaffordable Contribution: - Where applicants have a contribution to make according to the outcome of the prescribed test of resources, the Council may request additional written evidence (such as independent financial reports) to ascertain the inability to raise sufficient funds to cover their own contribution. In these circumstances the Council will consider approving discretionary grant aid if that is the only option for enabling the agreed works to proceed. The Council may seek further advice before determining the application. The contractor supplies a 5-year discretionary warranty is included in the purchase cost for specialist equipment including stairlifts, step lifts, hoists and wash/dry toilets. Please Appendix C

B2.2 Dementia Friendly Grant	
Purpose	Works to make the home 'dementia' friendly or to meet sensory needs and to help the individual to live safely, manage their own surroundings, and retain/develop their independence.
Eligible Applicant	Applicants must be owner occupiers or private tenants with a clinical diagnosis of dementia and referred by a General Practitioner, Occupational Therapist or other relevant health professional such as a Dementia Support Worker.
Eligible Works	To give personal choice to a person about how and where to meet their future care needs and focusing on being able to remain living safely, independently, and well at home for as long as possible. A referral confirming the works which are necessary and appropriate to support them to retain their independence. Examples of work may include: • Contrasting coloured handrails • Thermostatic taps • Lighting and door signage
Amount of funding	£2,500
Means Test	No means test
Land Charge	No additional land charge – other the application of the mandatory DFG land charge conditions.
Conditions	In addition to standard grant conditions: - Funding will be reviewed on an individual case basis. Applications must be accompanied by a voluntary intention that the property remain their only or main residence for 5 years.

Commented [CM1]: Iona asked how will this be enforced without a land charge - the answer is its not. Its becoming a rather redundant condition. How can you prove an intention???

Commented [JD2R1]: No enforcement it is a grant issued with principle.

B2.3 Discretionary Top-Up Grant	
Purpose	This is a discretionary grant to top up a DFG to carry out works that are above the current mandatory limit of £30,000, where the additional costs are considered justifiable for adaptations that meets the medical needs.
Eligible Applicant	Those eligible for a mandatory DFG - All tenures.
Eligible Works	Available towards the cost of DFG eligible works, taking into consideration discretionary powers to contribute funding towards adaptations under the Care Act and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act. Grant is not available for equipment that isn't normally provided via the DFG.
Amount of funding	Up to an additional £40,000 (added to the mandatory grant amount) can be approved for works that cost more than the mandatory grant limit to ensure that the adaptations that are necessary, appropriate, reasonable and practicable can be completed. Amounts above this discretionary amount (£40,000) will be considered for eligible works only on case-by-case basis and approved by the service manager.
Means Test	No additional DFG means test
Land Charge	Where the applicant is an owner-occupier, One third of the total value of the grant (mandatory and discretionary elements) awarded will be placed as a land charge from the date of completion of works where applicable (see appendix C). Note - This is in line with the proportion of land charges for a maximum mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant land charge, which is £10,000.00 or a third of the £30,000 mandatory grant element.
Conditions	In addition to mandatory grant conditions: - Funding will be reviewed on an individual case basis. Applications must be accompanied by an intention that the property remain their only or main residence for 5 years. One application in any 5-year period.

Commented [CM3]: Iona is doing some more work on this with a conveyance colleague. Id need to wait for them but think we can do this under the RRO 2002 reference in the policy?

Apply compound interest?? See earlier comment.

NO these are potential discretionary conditions that we would like legal to give a position on. Previously raised on the Homeground case when it was in Ashmore

Commented [JD4R3]: agreed

B2.4 Hoarding Support Grant	
Purpose	This is a discretionary grant to top up a mandatory DFG to carry out works that are required to enable eligible works under a mandatory DFG to be safely installed and used by disabled person.
Eligible Applicant	Those eligible for a mandatory DFG , will require a home assessment by a Private Sector Housing Officer. The assessment needs to score a 'clutter rating' of 5 or more.
Eligible Works	These are works that do not meet a need but are necessary for the mandatory grant eligible works to be completed.
Amount of funding	Up to £5000.00
Means Test	Mandatory means test only - No additional DFG means test
Land Charge	No additional land charge – other the application of the mandatory DFG land charge conditions.
Conditions	No additional conditions

B2.5 Hospital Discharge (Palliative Care) Grant	
Purpose	Support hospital or hospice discharge at end of life or to prevent bed blocking to enable the applicant to return or stay at home.
Eligible Applicant	Applicants must be referred from a hospital OT or other medical practitioner, in a hospital or hospice.
Eligible Works	Aids and adaptations to: a) be identified by a medical practitioner, end of life nurse, or Occupational Therapist as being required to enable the patient to return or remain home. This may require liaison with Community OT Teams. b) either benefit the individual or their end-of-life carer or nurse. c) be either permanent or temporary fixtures or fittings.

Amount of funding	Mandatory Grant Limit
Means Test	N/A
Land Charge	No additional land charge – other the application of the mandatory DFG land charge conditions.
Conditions	Mandatory conditions apply apart from the grant condition of the intention that the property remain their only or main residence for 5 years

B2.6 Minor aids and adaptations	
Purpose	Funding to support assistance available through a Minor Adaptations/Handyman Service to reduce necessity for full Disabled Facility Grant applications. This may be for works up to £1000.00.
Eligible Applicant	As directed by Adult Social Care
Eligible Works	To assist with provision of minor adaptations as requested by Adult Social Service Occupational Therapists.
Amount of funding	Up £1000.00
Means Test	N/A
Land Charge	N/A
Conditions	N/A

B2.7 Professional Fees	
Purpose	To pay professional fees and other ancillary charges which are eligible under a mandatory DFG application. It can also cover 'abortive' fees for works that were unable to proceed through no fault of the applicant. This also provides a more equitable access to DFGs for those on the Housing Needs Register seeking a suitable home that better meets their needs or new supply of housing that meets the Councils need assessment. This discretionary funding of fees allows for feasibility inspection and abortive fees prior to approval to determine if adaptation is possible.
Eligible Applicant	Those eligible for a mandatory DFG. All tenures.
Eligible Works	Eligible ancillary charges and professional fees are included in grant approvals for technical surveys and application support. The Professional Fees Grant allows for feasibility inspection and abortive fees prior to approval to determine if adaptation is possible. See the agent protocol for more details on abortive fees.
Amount of funding	£7,500.00 (based on a max of up to 15% of mandatory grant limit and capped fees chargeable under the agents protocol). Additional fees can be applied to the grant for specialised professional fees such as architects and structural surveyors.
Means Test	N/A
Land Charge	Included as proportion of total grant award – see appendix C.
Conditions	Fees will only be payable upon completion of the grant works.

B2.8a Rapidly Progressing and Highly Debilitating Conditions	
Purpose	To assist persons with for example MND with specialised living aids to enable independent and safe living.
Eligible Applicant	Disabled persons with an Occupational Therapy referral stating a condition considered to be rapidly progressing and highly debilitating conditions such as Motor Neurone Disease (MND).
Eligible Works	As per mandatory DFG.
Amount of funding	Up to £15,000.00
Means Test	No Means Test (see conditions for explanation)
Land Charge	No additional land charge – other the application of the mandatory DFG land charge conditions.
Conditions	In addition to standard grant conditions: - This element of discretionary funding recognises it is often the case people with MND want to continue to work during the early stages of the disease, where they may be assessed as having an excessive contribution which would lead to a NIL grant, compared to when they can no longer work and an un-adapted home can make day to day activities very difficult to manage. Applications will only be accepted after the OT has consulted with their clinical lead for approval. For palliative conditions, where the appropriateness of the proposed work has been thoughtfully considered, can also be included, but may be subject to a revised grant limit. On receipt of a referral for a disabled person with a rapidly progressing and highly debilitating condition, their grant enquiry will be prioritised. They will be offered discretionary funding for works up to £15,000. The grant applicant/disabled person will be required to privately fund the cost of any works exceeding the £15,000 limit. A limit of £15,000 is expected to cover the cost of adaptations that can be delivered in the appropriate timeframe. Longer term adaptations, while beneficial, could not be completed in a short period of time. This discretionary grant is a “one-off” grant, but does not, prevent the disabled person making an application for mandatory grant assistance in the future following a change in needs of the applicant.

B2.8b Neurodiversity and Substantially Debilitating Conditions	
Purpose	To assist the applicant who has a relevant diagnosis of conditions with specialised living aids to enable independent and safe living.
Eligible Applicant	Disabled persons with a General Practitioner, Occupational Therapist or other relevant health professional referral stating a condition that significantly and substantially has a long-term impact on day-to-day life e.g. Autism & Aspergers Syndrome.
Eligible Works	As per mandatory DFG, with consideration to sensory needs.
Amount of funding	Up to £15,000.00
Means Test	No Means Test (see conditions for explanation)
Land Charge	Where the applicant is an owner-occupier - One third of the total value of the grant (mandatory and discretionary elements) awarded will be placed as a land charge from the date of completion of works where applicable (see appendix C).
Conditions	In addition to standard grant conditions: - This element of discretionary funding recognises it is often the case people with a relevant diagnosis may want to continue to work, where they may be assessed as having an excessive contribution which would lead to a NIL grant, compared to when they may no longer work and an un-adapted home can make day to day activities very difficult to manage. Applications will only be accepted after the OT or relevant clinical professional has consulted with their clinical lead for approval. A limit of £15,000 is expected to cover the cost of adaptations that can be delivered in the appropriate timeframe. Longer term adaptations, while beneficial, could not be completed in a short period of time. This discretionary grant is a “one-off” grant, but does not, prevent the disabled person making an application for mandatory grant assistance assesses on the needs of the applicant.

2.9 Relocation Grant	
Purpose	A grant to help applicants with relocation costs of moving home, if adaptations to their current home through DFG, are deemed to not be reasonable or practicable to adapt but a move to a more suitable property that meets need can be achieved.
Eligible Applicant	Those eligible for Mandatory DFG. Any applications for this assistance will be supported by the Council working with an Occupational Therapist and property owner (where applicable) who have determined that options regarding adaptations at the current dwelling are either unachievable or can be delivered more cost effectively in a new dwelling.
Eligible Works	Eligible relocation expenses are: Estate agent fees; Solicitor costs; Survey costs; Stamp duty; Removal expenses; Disconnection/reconnection of appliances; occupational therapy assessment fees; up to 2 months' rent for one property to cover void payments for new landlord; costs of adaptations to new home under mandatory DFG not exceeding costs of adapting the original address.
Amount of funding	A discretionary grant can be considered up to the Mandatory Grant Limit for applications if the move is within Gloucester City. If outside of Gloucester City this will be limited to £5,000.00 for relocation costs if the applicant is moving to a more suitable dwelling that's supported by the new local authority. The applicant will be expected to contact the local authority of the new home for further DFG adaptation funding.
Means Test	No additional means test to the Mandatory DFG.
Land Charge	No additional land charge – other the application of the mandatory DFG land charge conditions.
Conditions	In addition to standard grant conditions: - A grant is available to help the applicant to move if adaptations to their current home through DFG are determined not to be necessary, appropriate, reasonable and practicable and they are considering relocation to a property they intend to purchase or rent. Applicants must be 18 or over on the date the application is made and in the case of a disabled child, the parent(s) would make the application.

	Any application must be supported by a recommendation from the Occupation Therapist or Trusted Assessor. The Council and occupational therapist service must be satisfied that the proposed property either meets the needs of the disabled person or are satisfied that it can be adapted at a reasonable cost. Consideration may be given to a move outside of Gloucester City, but this would require the agreement of the relevant local authority to consider any necessary adaptations before a relocation grant can be considered. Grants cannot be paid retrospectively. Assistance will not be given toward the purchase price of a new property. The Council will require at least two quotations from independent contractors that realistically reflect the cost of the eligible works/services provided. All applicants will be required to complete the move within 12 months from the date of approval of their application. If on sale of the applicant's existing property a net equity of more than £10,000 is released, the Relocation Grant will only fund the relocation costs and the equity released must be used towards additional adaptations. The relocation costs are listed separately in the eligible works and exclude the mandatory eligible works of adaptation. If the move is aborted through the fault of the applicant, then costs will not be paid, and any costs already paid will be reclaimed from the applicant.
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B2.10 Safe & Warm Home Repair Grant	
Purpose	This assistance is for owner occupiers only. The applicant must be over 65 with a severe or chronic condition affected by poor housing. A grant for necessary works that have been identified during the mandatory DFG adaptation and presents the disabled person with an additional and significant risk to health that exasperates their medical condition.
Eligible Applicant	This assistance is for owner occupiers only. The applicant must have lived in the property for 5 years prior to application and have made an application for a mandatory DFG; be over the age of 65 and have a chronic or severe health conditions affected by poor housing conditions and needs to undertake essential repairs to their home to remain safe and healthy. Examples of chronic or severe conditions includes Arthritis (osteo and rheumatoid, requiring regular treatment and review); cardiovascular disease (such as heart disease or stroke); respiratory disease (such as chronic bronchitis, severe asthma, emphysema or chronic pulmonary disease).
Eligible Works	Eligible works for this discretionary funding will be determined as defects that represent an HHSRS hazard rating bands A-C (category 1 hazard) as determined by the Housing Act 2004. Examples of eligible works may include heating repairs or replacement; insulation; works to prevent falls; and roof, window and door repairs.
Amount of funding	£5,000 maximum
Means Test	Applicants must be in receipt of a DFG 'Passporting' Benefit or LCTRB.
Land Charge	No additional land charge – other the application of the mandatory DFG land charge conditions.
Conditions	In addition to standard grant conditions, only 1 application, in any 10-year period.

Appendix B – How to Apply for Mandatory and Discretionary Grants

How to access this service

[Information on how to apply for a disabled facilities grant can be found on the Gloucester City Council website.](#)

Step 1

Contact relevant Social Services helpdesk below to set up a visit and assessment by an Occupational Therapist. Grant assistance can only be considered once the council has received a valid referral from an Occupational Therapist or clinical professional so the first step to making a grant application is to phone the relevant helpdesk below and set up an Occupational Therapist assessment to see if they think adaptations would be necessary to meet the disabled person's needs.

Adult Social Care

Phone: 01452 426 868

Email: socialcare.eng@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Website: www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adults-and-older-people

Children and families for disabled children (up to 19 years)

Phone: 01452 426 565

Email: childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Website: www.ghc.nhs.uk/our-teams-and-services/children-and-young-people/physical-health/childrens-occupational-therapy

Step 2

The Occupational Therapist or clinical professional will send Gloucester City Council a referral if they think adaptations are required to meet the medical needs of the disabled person.

Step 3

Gloucester City Council's Grant Officer will contact the applicant to start the application process. However, if you require further information about DFGs and how to apply please contact Gloucester City Councils, Private Sector Housing Team.

Phone: 01452 393 396

Email: heretohelp@gloucester.gov.uk

What is a full and complete grant application

An application is deemed to be valid once completed. A complete application consists of:

- Completed and signed Application form by the property owner or tenant, including the financial information for means testing of the disabled person.
- Occupation certificate for either an owner occupier, tenant, landlord or occupant of houseboat or caravan.
- Proof of ownership e.g., proof of title.
- Financial evidence of the disabled person for each of the incomes entered on to the form e.g., bank statements, pensions, benefits.
- Two or three quotes for the works (based upon as assessment of relevant works - Applicants may be supported to obtain these after completing the forms).
- Planning permission and Building Control Application, build over agreements (water), where applicable.
- Other permissions such as landlord consent to works.

Once the council is satisfied that they have received a complete application, they will validate the application.

Appendix C – Legislation

With reference to the guidance [Disabled Facilities Grant \(DFG\) delivery: Guidance for local authorities in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) and the legislation for the DFG the [Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 \(the 1996 Act\)](#), this section provides the context and information for how Gloucester City Council determine disabled facilities grant applications. The four main elements of a decision are:

- The disabled occupant and the applicant
- The eligible works
- Amount of grant
- Grant conditions

Once a formal application has been ‘properly’ submitted, the Council is under a duty to consider it within 6 months.

The Disabled Occupant

A “disabled occupant” is a “disabled person” who needs adaptations to a dwelling, houseboat or caravan where it is their stated intention on application to remain living in the property for the period of 5 years of the grant condition period.

A Disabled Person

To be eligible for a DFG a person is disabled if:

- their sight, hearing or speech is substantially impaired,
- they have a mental disorder or impairment of any kind, or
- they have a substantial physical disability by illness, injury, or impairment.

And that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

A substantial effect on day-to-day activities means one that’s ‘more than minor or trivial’. The effect on their normal day-to-day activities might be substantial if the disabled person has more than one impairment. The effects might only be ‘minor or trivial’ if they have very little effect on their daily life like if the only effect on them is that they have to stop for a few minutes rest after walking for a mile at a normal pace.

A long-term effect means something that has affected them or is likely to affect them for at least a year. The impairment will also still be considered to be long-term if it’s likely to affect the disabled person for the rest of their life even if that’s going to be less than a year.

A person is taken to be disabled if: they are an adult who is or could be registered under [section 77 of the Care Act 2014](#), or they are a child or young person registered under [paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989](#) who is a disabled child as defined by [section 17 of the Children Act 1989](#).

Where they intend to live

A DFG is available to fund facilities for a disabled person in:

- dwellings,
- qualifying houseboats and caravans, and
- in the common parts of buildings containing one or more flats where they live.

A “dwelling” is defined as a building (or part of a building, e.g. a flat) occupied as separate premises. This includes dwellings where someone lives as part of their employment, like a farm cottage or a flat over a shop.

Where more than one disabled person lives at the same address, the Council can consider multiple applications based on individual needs.

Children living in dual residency arrangements

Where a disabled child has parents who are separated and the child lives for part of the time with each parent, a mandatory DFG is only available at the address, which is the main residence of the disabled child, usually the home of the parent in receipt of child benefit. However, it will often be in the best interests of the child to provide adaptations at both locations and this policy will allow the local authority to apply discretion on a case by case basis. Under these circumstances it is assumed that the one party will apply for a mandatory DFG at the main residence within Gloucester City.

The Council will use its discretionary powers in considering applications to adapt the other home of a disabled child, if it is situated within its boundary to ensure that they can maintain normal living arrangements. Considering the details of any court order and specifically the allocation of time spent with each parent in determining eligibility for assistance.

In determining the works that might be considered as eligible for assistance the Council will consider the suitability of the main residence for adaptation, the complexity and scope of the adaptations required and any observations or referral made by the Occupational Therapist.

Any assistance provided under this heading will be up to a combined maximum mandatory award of £30,000 and £40,000 of discretionary funding, inclusive of any fees, such as surveyors; but will not be subject to any form of means testing. The maximum amount of funding available for both the mandatory and discretionary elements will be distributed between the two grants at the discretion of the Council.

Any discretionary award will be repayable to the Council if the subject property is sold within 10 years of the certified date (the date the eligible works are completed). The award amount will be recorded as a local land registry charge and recovered on the same conditions applied to mandatory grant recovery.

Situations outside of these prescribed circumstances would be considered on their own merits following the receipt of written representations from the grant applicant.

The Council maintains the discretion to only consider discretionary awards whilst they have sufficient funds to sustain mandatory DFG approvals. The Council reserves the right not to approve any discretionary assistance.

Children in foster care

Foster carers are eligible to apply for a DFG on behalf of a foster child, but provision may depend on the type and length of placement, and the Council will consider shorter periods of intention to occupy.

Who can make a DFG application?

Only certain people can make a valid application - in many cases this may not be the disabled person I.

The Applicant

The applicant cannot be:

- Public bodies such as a Local Authority or Clinical Commissioning Group
- A “person from abroad” – those without status to reside.
- Anyone under 18 years of age.

A valid application can be made by:

- someone who has an owner’s interest in the property (either an owner-occupier or a landlord [s.21])
- a tenant of a dwelling [s.22]; or
- the occupant of a caravan or houseboat [s.22A].

An **owner’s application** must be accompanied by a certificate which confirms that they:

- already have or propose to acquire an owner’s interest (the grant cannot be approved until they take ownership).
(For common parts applications, The Housing Renewal Grants (Owner’s Interest) Directions 1996 sets out that a certificate for each flat of the building is required), and

- intend that the disabled person will live in the dwelling as their only or main residence for the grant condition period (5 years).
- Where more than one owner, any of the owners can make a solo application.
- Leaseholders are owners if they have 5 or more years remaining.
- A freehold landlord may also make an application.

A **tenant's application** must be accompanied by a certificate which confirms that they:

- are making a tenant's application; and
- intend that the disabled person will live in the dwelling as their only or main residence for the grant condition period (5 years) or for such shorter period as their health and other relevant circumstances permit.

All tenant applications should also be accompanied by an owner's certificate signed by the landlord unless the Council thinks it is unreasonable to do so in the circumstances. The landlord must still give permission for the works.

If the landlord's consent is unreasonably withheld, or unreasonable conditions have been attached it must be taken that consent has been given. The Council will review this on a case-by-case basis, considering factors such as related rent increases or payment to remove adaptations and a requirement to reinstate.

These provisions do not apply to a protected tenancy under [section 1 of the Rent Act 1977](#) or a statutory tenancy under [section 2 of that Act](#) or a secure tenancy under the [Housing Act 1985](#).

An **occupant's application** must be accompanied by a certificate which confirms that they:

- are making an occupant's application; and
- intend that the disabled person will live in the dwelling as their only or main residence for the grant condition period (5 years).

Unless the Council think it is unreasonable to do so in the circumstances, all occupant's applications should also be accompanied by a consent certificate signed by owners of the houseboat and mooring or the caravan and caravan park.

Each certificate confirms the intention of the applicant at the time of the application and so long as that was genuinely their intention, no repayment of grant is required if circumstances change, and the disabled person can no longer occupy it as intended.

The grant condition period starts when the works are completed to the satisfaction of the Council ("the certified date" (section 44)).

Properties held in trust

These should be treated in the same way as applications by owner-occupiers, tenants or occupiers. A trustee or beneficiary applying for a grant must be able to fulfil all the normal grant conditions.

Persons from abroad

The applicant cannot be a 'person from abroad' within the meaning of [regulation 10 of the Housing Benefit Regulations 2006](#) or as the case may be [regulation 10 of the Housing Benefit \(Persons who have attained the qualifying age for state pension credit\) Regulations 2006](#) (see [regulation 3 of the Housing Renewal Grants Regulations 1996 \(S.I. 1996/2890\)](#)).

The Council is also not allowed to pay a grant where a disabled person who could have applied for a grant is a "person from abroad", even though the applicant is not a "person from abroad".

The Armed Forces Community

Any adaptations for injured or disabled service personnel (for them or their dependents) who live in Service Accommodation and continue to work in the Armed Forces, will be funded by the Ministry of Defence and this policy will not apply.

If the Council receive applications from serving Armed Forces personnel or veterans who live in their own accommodation, either on behalf of themselves or family members, the statutory Armed Forces Covenant Duty will apply and specific exemptions will be considered for any compensatory and financial awards that the applicant may have received following any incident or accident that resulted in them becoming disabled .

Mental Capacity

If the Council thinks an applicant lacks capacity to make a particular decision or take a particular action for themselves at the time the decision or action needs to be taken, they should follow the guidance laid out in the [Code of Practice to the Mental Capacity Act 2005](#).

The Eligible and relevant Works Tests

To determine which adaptations are "eligible works" for grant assistance, there must be 'A' - a purpose for the works and 'B' – the relevant works pass the test of 'necessary and appropriate' and 'reasonable and practicable' NARP.

A - The Purposes

The Act sets out the “purposes” ([section 23](#)) for which a grant must be approved. The first stage is to assess whether the disabled person needs adaptations to meet these “purposes”. The purposes for which a grant can be approved are:

1. Making it easier for the disabled person to access and leave the dwelling, houseboat, or park home.
2. Ensuring the dwelling, houseboat, or park home is safe for the disabled person and others living with them.
3. Improving access to a room used as the main family area.
4. Improving access to a room used for sleeping.
5. Improving access to a room with a lavatory or facilitating the use of such a facility for the disabled person.
6. Improving access to a room with a bath or shower or facilitating the use of such a facility for the disabled person.
7. Improving access to a room with a wash hand basin or facilitating the use of such a facility for the disabled person.
8. Making it easier for the disabled person to prepare and cook food.
9. Upgrading the heating system to meet the needs of the disabled person or providing a suitable heating system if none exists or the existing one is not suitable.
10. Making it easier for the disabled person to access and control sources of power, light, or heat.
11. Enhancing access and mobility around the dwelling, houseboat, or park home to enable the disabled person to care for another resident in need of assistance.
12. Improving access to and from a garden for the disabled person or making the garden accessible and safe for them.

These purposes cover a wide range of potential adaptations to cover most circumstances and to meet the adaptation needs of disabled people whose needs are less obvious, such as those with a sight or hearing impairment, a neurodiverse condition or a learning disability.

B - The Relevant Works

If one or more purposes have been identified, the Council will consider the “relevant works” to meet those purposes. For example:

- A ramp could be the relevant work to meet the purpose of improving access to the home
- A stairlift could be the relevant work to meet the purpose of accessing a room used for sleeping.

Necessary and Appropriate

Relevant works are necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the disabled person ([section 24\(3\)\(a\)](#)). The Council must make this decision, in consultation with the social services authority.

DFGs are designed to give disabled people a degree of independence in the home and should aim to meet current and anticipated future needs. If the disabled person has care needs, the impact of adaptations on the level of this care should be considered including whether tasks will be reduced or eased. The disabled person should gain a degree of independence, or if dependent upon the care of others, the adaptation should significantly ease the burden of the carer.

In all cases the assessment of whether relevant works are necessary and appropriate must be made against each applicable purpose individually. So, for example, if it is not possible to appropriately provide access to a room suitable for sleeping, that should not in itself prevent a grant being awarded to gain access to the home.

Where the disabled person has a limited life expectancy then it may be appropriate to consider funding adaptations that can be more easily removed when they are no longer required if that is considered the right approach in the circumstances.

There will be occasions when the need to address one or more purpose is significantly more urgent than others. The Council will consider the benefits of proceeding with assessing the urgent works and phased approvals if there would be undue delay in assessing for all.

For some cases where the disabled person and the applicant elect for a higher cost option. The Council will need to ensure that the works meet the required purposes and are necessary and appropriate, but the estimated expense would still be based on the lower cost option.

Reasonable and Practicable

Where the relevant works have been judged to be necessary and appropriate, the Council will consider if it is reasonable and practicable to carry out the works having "regard to the age, design, layout and condition" of the property.

If it is not to be a good use of resources to award a DFG to adapt an old, run-down building, the Council may consider that the relevant works are not reasonable and practicable. In these cases, the applicant will be given information and advice on their housing options and supported into a more appropriate home.

Other issues, such as whether the property is otherwise suitable for the disabled person are not relevant considerations.

The Council must also be mindful of achieving the best value for money. Where there are potential alternative options for the relevant works that could meet the required purposes, or the disabled person or applicant elect for a higher cost option, the Council would usually base the approval on the lower-cost option. All options must meet the required purposes and be necessary and appropriate.

For example, where the purpose is to provide access to a room suitable for sleeping, then a stairlift or utilising an existing ground floor room are likely to be preferred over building a new bedroom.

Amount of Grant

The Council will consider the following when determining the amount of grant:

- The reasonable cost of carrying out the eligible works along with the cost of associated services and charges – this is the “estimated expense”; and
- The amount of grant the council can award, takes into account the estimated expense, any assessed applicant contributions and the maximum amount of grant approved (including both mandatory and discretionary, where applicable).

Grant applications require at least two quotations from different contractors for the costs of the relevant works. Larger schemes of work over £30,000.00 will require a minimum of three quotes. The council will exercise discretion in some circumstances, allowing a single quotation for specialist equipment.

The contract for carrying out the works will be between the applicant and the contractor which means that public procurement rules do not apply.

Other services and charges

The Act allows the cost of certain services and charges to be included with the grant application. These are set out in The Housing Renewal Grants (Services and Charges) Order 1996 and include costs associated with preparing the application and the carrying out of works:

1. confirming that the applicant has an owner's interest.
2. technical and structural surveys.
3. the design and preparation of plans and drawings.
4. the preparation of specifications of schedules of relevant works.
5. assistance in completing forms.
6. advice on financing the costs of the relevant works which are not met by grant.
7. making applications for building regulations approval (including any application fee and the preparation of related documents).
8. making applications for planning permission (including any application fee and the preparation of related documents).
9. making applications for listed building consent (including any application fee and the preparation of related documents).
10. making applications for conservation area consent (including any application fee and the preparation of related documents).
11. obtaining tenders/quotes.
12. providing advice on building contracts.
13. considering tenders.
14. supervising the relevant works; disconnecting and reconnecting electricity, gas, water, or drainage utilities where this is necessitated by the relevant works; and paying contractors.
15. The services and charges of a private occupational therapist in relation to the relevant works can also be included.

A discretionary grant will cover the cost of a maintenance and service agreement for a period of five years (where available) from the certified installation date for certain equipment such as stair lifts, through-floor lifts, wash/dry toilets, step-lifts, and similar items that were installed with the assistance of a Disabled Facilities Grant.

In cases where a maintenance agreement of 5 years is not available from the manufacturer, a discretionary grant will fund the maximum warranty period that is available. If a reconditioned stair lift is being installed, any remaining warranty will be extended to the full 5 years if possible. The aim is to ensure that essential equipment remains in good working condition and well-maintained for an extended period after installation.

The means test

An application for a Disabled Facilities Grant will be subject to a means test in accordance with the regulations made under the 1996 Act, including any local amendments within this policy. The maximum mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant award at the time of policy publication is £30,000 minus any assessed contribution required by a 'means test' (test of financial resources). However, this policy allows for the discretionary assistance of a £10,000 waiver to towards the applicant's contribution. Anything over £10,000 that is required as a applicant contribution following the Means Test must be met by the applicant.

If the mandatory grant limit is changed by statute, then the maximum available Disabled Facilities Grant award by Gloucester City Council will reflect this.

If an applicant receives multiple grant awards over time, their assessed contribution to the first grant will be considered if it falls within the original contribution period (10 years for owner-occupiers and 5 years for tenants).

NOTE: where an applicant is in receipt of a recognised, qualifying, means-tested benefit they will not be further means-tested, and they will have no calculated contribution to make. Where works are for the benefit of a child or young person up until their 19th birthday or younger at the date of application – they too will be exempt from a means test and no contribution will be required.

Gloucester City Council has also made a decision to introduce Local Council Tax Reduction (LCTR) as a qualifying passporting benefit for applicants applying for Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants means tests. Applicants who receive LCTR will now be able to apply for a Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grant without having to undergo the means test. This enhancement aims to support more individuals in accessing the grants they need for home adaptations.

Grant conditions

The following conditions may apply to an award of a Disabled Facilities Grant:

Future occupation of the dwelling

It is a condition that for 5 years from the date of completion of the works, the dwelling is occupied in accordance with the intention stated in the certificate submitted as part of the application.

Local Land Charge – where the applicant has an owners interest

The Council will register a local land charge on a dwelling. The charge will be placed on owner's applications where the amount of grant exceeds £5,000. The maximum land charge for the mandatory grant (up to £30,000) is £10,000. Gloucester City Council will apply the same one third principle to the discretionary grant awards either in conjunction with the mandatory award (where applicable) or in isolation where a mandatory grant award is not provided. This land charge may be recovered, if the property is sold or otherwise disposed of within ten years of the certified date. Compound interest will not be applied to this amount as this would not be in alignment for the principles of the awarding of a grant for disabled persons.

Where the applicant is a foster carer and the application is associated with a long-term placement, a charge will not usually be placed.

Statement of principles on exercising discretion for the repayment of a grant or land charge.

If a dwelling that has been adapted through a DFG grant is sold or disposed of within ten years, the Service manager (upon consultation with the Head of One Legal and the Corporate Director) will consider whether or not it is reasonable to demand repayment or part repayment of the charge on behalf of the council, taking into account:

- the financial hardship it would cause;
- whether the sale is due to an employment-related relocation;
- whether the sale is connected with the physical or mental health or well-being of the grant recipient or of a disabled occupant of the premises; and
- whether the sale will enable the recipient of the grant to provide care to another disabled person.

If a grant is initially awarded for an amount of less than £5,000, but a variation may increase the award to over the land charge threshold, the applicant will be consulted before the grant is revised if it would result in a charge being placed.

Recovery of equipment

The Council may include a condition that specialist equipment, such as a stairlift, step lift, hoists etc. may be recovered where it is no longer required. Where it is clear that the equipment will not be reused because of age or condition the Council may decide to waive this right to recovery.

Commented [CM5]: Iona- who decides if grant repaid - PSH TL has been as no process for this or any assistance offered by business support. Iona says that guidance suggest we must have a policy on exercising discretion when exercising repayment. I am not aware of this and do not have time to work this through. We have a land charge policy that should be enough or maybe Iona could review that too

Use of contractors

The works must be performed by the agreed contractor(s) whose quotation was submitted as part of the application. If a different contractor is to carry out the works, the Council's consent must be obtained beforehand, and a new estimate from the new contractor must be submitted. However, any additional costs resulting from the change in contractor must be covered separately by the applicant.

The Council will not accept an invoice, demand, or receipt if it is issued by the applicant or a family member. If the applicant or a family member carries out the work, only the cost of materials used will be eligible for financial assistance.

Completion of the works

Payment of the grant is conditional on the eligible works being completed within 12 months from the date of approval of the grant. The Council may extend this period if there is a valid reason, and such requests must be made in writing before the 12-month period ends. The payment of the grant depends on the works being done to the Council's satisfaction and upon receiving a satisfactory invoice, demand, or receipt for the works and any related services or changes.

The Council will usually make payments directly to the contractor on behalf of the applicant, not to the applicant themselves. If there is any disagreement about a payment made to the contractor, it's unlikely a payment will be made until the dispute is resolved. However, the Council may make payment directly to the applicant if they have provided the necessary information before grant approval.

Adapted Properties and Council Tax deductions

Where a home has been adapted for a disabled person you may be eligible for a council tax deduction.

To qualify the person with the disability must live in the property as their main home and the property must have one of the following:

- an additional room used by the disabled person for a special reason, for example, dialysis equipment in a new ground floor extension for sleeping.
- an extra bathroom or kitchen for the use of the disabled person
- extra floor space inside the property for the disabled person to use a wheelchair, such as an extension. Wheelchairs for outside use only are excluded.

For more information please visit - [Disabled Reduction | Gloucester City Council](#)

Guidance and Legislation

[Disabled Facilities Grant \(DFG\) delivery: Guidance for local authorities in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 \(the 1996 Act\),](#)

[The Regulatory Reform \(Housing Assistance \(England and Wales\) order 2002\]](#)

[Care Act 2014](#)

[Housing Act 2004](#)

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